MM93-48





# Sample letter

Dear Chairman Hundt;

As a parent of two children, I am writing to urge you to defend the best interests of our nation's children by strengthening the guidelines for the Children's Television Act.

Millions of American children grow up facing constant crises such as hunger, poverty, family problems and violence – leaving them ill-prepared to learn in school. Millions more are educated in under funded and troubled school systems. The number of school drop-outs and illiterate high school graduates increases dramatically each year. These trends imperil our nation's health, security and future.

Television has an unparalleled influence in the lives of all Americans and can play an unprecedented role in nourishing the minds of our nation's children. Today, children have better access to sensationalistic talk show, violent cartoons, and adult sitcoms than they do to programming designed to enrich their minds. This must change!

The market forces, which govern how shows are developed and aired, are biased against educational programming for children. We cannot leave the educational needs of our nation's children in the unseen hands of market forces. Inaction has already led to the dominance of shows cynically designed to serve as marketing vehicles for toys, candy and other products.

The FCC must stand up for children. The FCC must provide broadcasters with a clearer definition of "educational" programming and make sure that television stations air at least one hour a day of these shows between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. in regularly scheduled time slots. America's children are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Robin E. Davis

*(Letter sample contributed by the National Association of the Education of Young Children.)*

Davis
1806 Smith Rd
Golden Co. 80401

MM93-48

R.D. 2 Box 160-D
Hummelstown, PA 17036
November 16, 1994

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL





Reed E. Hundt
Chairman, FCC
1919 M St. NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear sir:

I am writing to you because it has come to my attention that commercials during children's programs are corrupting the minds of our nation's children. Children are subjected to commercials that entice them to want things that are dangerous and could cause very violent behavior and I would like to see a change.

I would like to propose an idea that would help to eliminate these harmful commercials from hitting the airways. What I would like to propose to you is that you re-examine the type of commerials that our children are being exposed to. Perhaps you could enlist the assistance of an expert in the field of Early Childhood Education who could help you to see how damaging the commercials and television shows that children watch really are.

I am an Early Childhood Education major at Harrisburg Area Community College and I adore children and it hurts me to see some of the things that our children are watching. I urge and would appreciate your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Laughery

PP-93-48

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**LRG** Inc.

64 Davis Road
Port Washington, NY 11050
Phone/fax (516) 883-9417
Email geneleon@delphi.com

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Hon. R. Hundt, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street
Washington, DC 22054

Dear Chairman Hundt:

Your report on the McNeil/Lehrer Newshour today showed a commendable emphasis on putting education on the Information Infrastructure. However, truly meeting educational needs may well have other than educational benefits. The result may well provide an enhanced community dialog centered around the schools.

The accompanying outline discusses such an educational structure. The focus is on maximized access to all information resources (except for entertainment, video games and shopping) for students, teachers and parents. The physical structure is quite different from those being proposed by the major telecommunication players. It arose from my fascination with ADSL several years ago. However, you can judge for yourself.

The idea for the project started about two years ago when I and some colleagues serving on the FCC's Advisory Committee for Advanced Television Services felt that educational requirements were being overlooked. In a short time the interdisciplinary group of professionals (listed on the last page) became involved in formulating a detailed program which is outlined in the attached material.

Kentucky Educational Television will seek a grant to implement the development using my R&D group, LRG Inc., to carry out the technical design. I have a 20 year relationship with KET and can work with them quite closely. Professor Jerome Kagan of Harvard's Department of Psychology also contributed greatly to the discussions and has agreed to lead a group which will help in the design and lead the evaluation of the project's phases. I will work as the Principle Investigator.

We expect the project's four phases to require 32 months to complete. Required funding, to be allocated between KET, Harvard and LRG is estimated at $2,100,000 during that time.

At later stages in the development, we will generate RFI's to potential vendors. Similarly, during the development, we will establish contact with leading state and local educational authorities. The ultimate goal is to provide a technically enhanced facility that can provide education, at realistic costs, to meet the needs of children who must function in the Information Age.

This is perhaps different than most of the telecommunication agenda that come before you. Is it reasonable?

Yours truly,

Eugene Leonard

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List A B C D E

# Outline - A Project to enhance the educational environment for the Information Age Classroom

The last two decades of the Twentieth Century have seen many educational reform movements sweeping across America, carrying with them various plans for integrating computers and other digital technologies into the Nation's classrooms. To date, implementing these plans has typically meant searching among already existing hardware, designed for other uses and markets, for equipment that fits within schools' limited budgets, that can be adapted for the classroom.

Similarly, the major plans for the new information infrastructure, designed primarily for business and consumer applications, offer little to empower communication between students, teachers and parents whether in the school or at home.

This project represents a different approach - one designed from the ground up to serve the purposes of education. The proposed approach integrates digital hardware and software, available communications, and educational programming in a design and testing process implemented by leading professionals in the fields of cognition, education and information technology.

Summary

Over the past 18 months, a group of educational and technical professionals from around the country has been holding informal discussions on what should comprise an Information Age educational environment. Members of Harvard's educational and psychological faculties, Kentucky Educational Television's technical and instructional staff, and through LRG Inc., engineers in various computer and communication engineers have all cooperated in the effort.

Three general principles have been developed:

* Classroom technology should enhance, not replace teacher-student and student-student relationships.

* Classroom technology should reward and encourage curiosity, introducing students to the intellectual challenges and new vocational opportuniies of the Information Age.

* Classroom technology and school resources should be accessible by the student for work at home, simultaneously enabling all parents, no matter what their social or economic status, to be involved in their childrens' education even while in their homes.

The discussions have resulted in a preliminary plan for a three-tiered hierarchy of school technology, along with a 32 month timetable for designing and evaluating several generations of prototype systems. Throughout the process, the focus has been on learning processes at school and at home. In many previous design programs the engineers tell the educators what can be done. In this project the two groups interact continually to decide what *should* be done.

## Overview of the Proposed Physical Structure

The enclosed drawing shows the hierarchal relationship of the project's components and equipment.

### In the School

Universal, on demand access to educational resources, in school or at home is one of the fundamental goals of this project. The design process has already re-examined the allocation of technical functions on a preliminary basis to provide only what is necessary at each level of the hierarchy. The result targets a fully integrated system with three main components:

* Each student has a **Screen pad** containing the bare minimum of equipment necessary to:
  - ..accept typed, handwritten, drawn or spoken input
  - ..output alphanumeric and graphical displays, plus audio
  - ..maintain wireless communication with the **Teacher's Console**

* **The Teacher's Console**, controlled by the teacher, performs complex analysis, computing and memory tasks that support the Screen-pad, and:
  - ..monitors individual student performance and problems
  - ..sends and records responses
  - ..can link individual or groups of students together
  - ..assists in routine record-keeping, and
  - ..communicates with the **School Processing Center**

* The **School Processing Center** supports the Teacher Consoles with additional storage, communication and computing capability, and:
  - ..incorporates the school electronic reference library
  - ..maintains overall school records and accounts
  - ..accesses external satellite, telephone or fiber optic links.

### In the Home

Another point of emphasis in most education reform movements is the greater involvement of the parents in schools and education, whether it's meeting individually with teachers or serving in school-based, decision-making committees. Many of these efforts have fallen short of their goals not necessarily because parents are *unwilling* to get involved, but because they find themselves *unable* to get involved. The Screen-pad, brought home by the student for purposes of home work, should facilitate broader parent involvement in the school work, school policies and perhaps, extension to broader community discussion, mediated via school facilities.

The Screen-pad in the home communicates by wireless, just as it does in class, but with a low-cost Adapter unit. The Adapter, in turn connected to existing telephone (or in some cases, cable) facilities, provides access to the School Processing Center. Security of the equipment in the home is a consideration. The Screen-pad is useless unless communicating through the Adapter and enabled by the School Processing Center. Provisions for building additional safeguards into the system will be considered after the technical operational characteristics have been more fully determined.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Four phases have been defined for the Project. In each phase, Kentucky Educational Television (KET) led by John Gorman, a group of Harvard academicians led by Professor Jerome Kagan (Harvard) and LRG Inc. led by Eugene Leonard (LRG) will jointly define the goals, implement the technology and evaluate the progress. Eugene Leonard, the project's initiator will serve as Principle Investigator.

Phase 1 - Determine Initial Input/output characteristics

The goal of this phase is to produce, from presently available equipment, several "bread-board" units which simulate the Screen-pad and the Teacher's Console. A variety of input/output scenarios will be incorporated into the units by LRG and KET. Variable effects of color, resolution, update time, audio response, voice recognition, etc. will be evaluated by Harvard and KET instructional personnel. Results of the evaluation will be used to establish the first set of operating characteristics.

Phase 1 will take six months, including provision for two iterations.

Phase 2- Development of Detailed Operational Specifictions

Preliminary design of the final Screen-pad will be started by LRG with assistance from KET's technical group. Simultaneously, the "bread-board" units will be made available to KET instructional personnel and associates at Harvard. These will be used to examine scenarios for a variety of learning situations in different subjects and various grades.

The results of the test scenarios and the preliminary technical design will be used to define the working set of design and operational specifications. LRG will start design and construction of two prototype classroom systems, with one Teacher's Console and 20 Screen-pads each, in the second month.

Phase 2 will require four months.

Phase 3- Construction of Two Classroom Systems / Program Development

KET and Harvard personnel will continue to develop educational software specifically oriented to the Screen-pad/Teacher's Console environment. Construction of the prototype classrooms will continue.

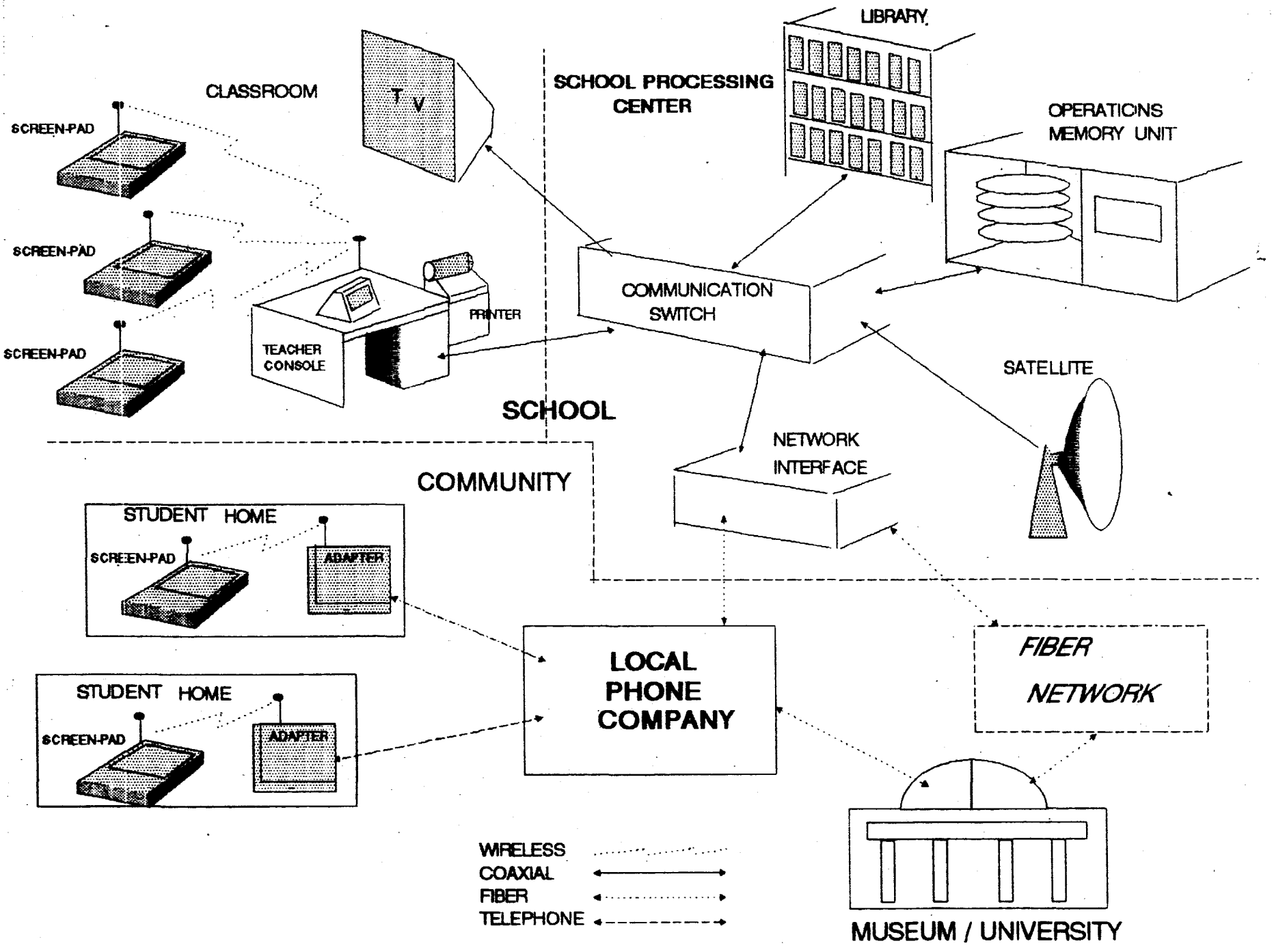
Specifications for a prototype School Processing Center and the Teacher's Console will be developed by LRG and KET. RFIs will be sent to potential vendors. Sites to test the two prototype classrooms will be selected. These should include possibility of parent participation.

Phase 3 will require eight months.

Phase 4- Extended testing in Selected Sites

LRG will install prototype classrooms in the selected locations for specific time frames. LRG and KET personnel will monitor software and hardware operation. Harvard will report on educational effectiveness. LRG and KET will iniate discussions with school authorities and with potential equipment vendors.

Phase 4 will require 14 months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OPERATIONS MEMORY UNIT
COMMUNICATION SWITCH
SATELLITE
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NETWORK INTERFACE
COMMUNITY
STUDENT HOME
SCREEN-PAD
ADAPTER
STUDENT HOME
SCREEN-PAD
ADAPTER
LOCAL PHONE COMPANY
FIBER NETWORK
WIRELESS
COAXIAL
FIBER
TELEPHONE
MUSEUM / UNIVERSITY

The group of professionals who have taken part in the educational and technical discussions with Mr. Leonard are:

Kurt W. Fischer, Ph.D. - Professor, Harvard University
Graduate School of Education

John F. Gorman - Director, Interactive Learning Division of the
Kentucky Educational Television.

Jukka Hamalainen - Vice President and Director of the Panasonic
Technologies Applied Research Laboratory

Jerome Kagan - Daniel and Amy Starch Professor of Psychology,
Harvard University

Bernard Lechner - Consultant, video and telecommunications

Eugene Leonard - President of LRG, Inc. the operating entity for
the proposed program. (See attached profile)

Terence M. Woolsey - Coordinator, Communications Services
Fairfax Country Public Schools

David L. Waring - ADSL technology development,
Bellcore

Sidney L. Webb - Executive Producer of the KET GED television
series and the KET literacy series.

Robin Wilkins - Director Eastern Suffolk BOCES